



Diocese of Buffalo
Department of Youth & Young Adult Ministry
 A member of the Catholic Education Division

Annual Report 2010-2011

The Department of Youth & Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Buffalo is pleased to present this annual report of our activities and accomplishments from September 2010 through August 2011. Please join with us in celebrating all that has been accomplished in this ministry during this past year!



Twenty-nine objectives were addressed during the past year: 11 objectives have been completed (some which require ongoing development and maintenance), and 18 items are in process. Progress was evaluated regularly through the year, and the plan was reviewed and revised in August, resulting in the creation of six new objectives. The staff plans to begin work on these six new objectives, plus thirteen of the other initial

2010-2011 Goals

1) *Grow young adult ministry, especially through Millennial Milestones Project.*

Young adult ministry expanded in significant ways throughout the past year. Several diocesan programs were successfully piloted:

- ◆ School teachers' retreat
- ◆ Fall hiking retreat
- ◆ Play to Your Strengths workshops (4)
- ◆ Campus to Parish dialogue with campus ministry and parish leaders
- ◆ Junior Advisor track at Diocesan Youth Convention
- ◆ Charis Seekers' Retreat
- ◆ Off to College event

I thought the hike was great. My week is usually packed with work that keeps me chained behind my computer all day, so getting out was a great feeling. The quiet time was definitely something I needed.

Participant from Hiking Retreat

The Millennial Milestones Project, which began in January 2009, was brought to a formal conclusion in June 2011 with an

Emerging Best Practices Showcase where project parishes shared their learning and insight. (Details can be found on our web site: www.dobyouth.org) Diocesan staff will continue to work with former project parishes and newly interested parishes to encourage the expansion of outreach to young adults.

Finally, Greg Coogan (Young Adult Ministry Coordinator) provided consultation to several parishes and support for local young adult initiatives, including [re], Catholic Underground, Theology on Tap and others. Sadly, Greg left our staff in August 2011 for a position as Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministry in Camden, NJ. The search process is underway for a new Young Adult Ministry Coordinator who will build on these accomplishments and continue to grow young adult ministry in the Diocese of Buffalo.

2) *Implement Action Plan developed in summer 2010.*

The action plan (based on the feedback we received in spring 2010 from focus groups and surveys) initially included 48 objectives in seven key areas.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 102.....Parishes Served Overall
- 80Parishes served through Youth Programs
- 68Parishes served through Adult Training/Formation
- 24Parishes served through Consultation Contacts
- 275.....Lights for the World participants
- 880.....Youth Convention participants
- 42Young Christians at Work participants
- 56Christian Leadership Institute participants
- 45Youth retreat participants
- 14.....Diocesan Youth Board members
- 37Young adults attending Play to Your Strengths
- 64Young Adult retreat participants
- 116Catholic scouting troops in the diocese
- 190.....Religious emblems awarded to scouts
- 28Rental groups at Camp Turner
- 372.....Summer Campers
- 2,535+ ..Contacts with Youth & YA through dept. programs

objectives, in the coming year. There are too many objectives completed and underway to provide a full listing in this report, but highlights include:

- ◆ Incorporating diverse spiritualities into department events
- ◆ Expanding involvement of parish leaders in planning and implementation of programs
- ◆ Designing more effective evaluation and feedback tools
- ◆ Initiating the young adult programs mentioned above
- ◆ Creating a prayer support network for department

3) *Create and implement communication plan, including electronic media*

Beginning in September 2010, the department transitioned regular communication with parish leaders from quarterly paper mailings to monthly email newsletters. We have also continued to make use of our department Facebook presence to share information. Our staff continues to develop areas of our web site to provide the information and resources that ministry leaders need for fruitful ministry.

Thank you for a great presentation yesterday! We enjoyed the creative ways on how the three diverse parishes have engaged the Strong Catholic Families initiative in their parish settings. We came away from the session inspired and anxious to continue what we started here.

Parish Leader from Strong Catholic Families Coffee Hour

Other Key Accomplishments

- 1) The DYYAM, in collaboration with the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation, Department of Catholic Schools and Office

of Family Life, launched the Strong Catholic Families: Strong Catholic Youth initiative.

- 2) The DYYAM designed and implemented new methods of gathering feedback about the Diocesan Youth Convention—from youth, from parish leaders who attend, and from parish leaders who do not typically attend—and began a process of reformatting the Convention.
- 3) Last year's innovations (Parent Track at Youth Convention, resources for parents of Christian Leadership Institute, expansion of Convention volunteer base) were repeated and more fully integrated into operations.

Goals for 2011-2012

1) *Continue implementation of department action plan.*

Implementation, review and revision of the action plan has progressed as noted above. The coming year will include revision of the programs and services offered by the department. Focus will be on revising or eliminating diocesan youth programming to allow more time and resources to be devoted to supporting and developing parish ministry efforts, including the training and formation of adult leaders.

2) *Follow up with those who attend diocesan programs.*

The department will increase efforts to follow up with individual youth and young adults who attend diocesan programs and with the parish leaders who work with and support them on a regular basis. Strategies may include the use of social media or other web 2.0 technologies, and invitation to other programming which builds on their past experiences.

Many Thanks for the following financial gifts:

- ◆ \$95,500 from the Foundation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Buffalo for ongoing support of the Millennial Milestones Project
- ◆ \$9,100 from the Friends of Father Gary for Christian Leadership Institute scholarships
- ◆ \$1,290 in memory of Lou Lombardo (staff member from 1964-1999) from his friends and family for youth ministry program scholarships

3) *Engage in more intentional communication with pastors.*

The communication plan implemented in 2010-2011 will be expanded to include appropriate communication with pastors. The department will prepare and disseminate regular updates for pastors on our work and continue direct, personal outreach to individual pastors. A gathering for priests focused on outreach to youth is planned for February 2012.

I just have to express a word of congratulations. That was a nice job that you did with the Millennial Milestones showcase - a most challenging initiative to be sure. I was at the first event and I could see real progress in the projects and people present. The showcase event gave me a sense of the accomplishments, challenges and future hopes all in a couple of short hours. Your dedication and expertise were also clearly on display for all the parishes who attended that night! Wonderful team work.

Feedback to staff of Youth & Young Adult Ministry & Lifelong Faith Formation from a Diocesan Colleague